Walk and Learn

Introduction: In our busy world today, it is hard for us to really study nature. While completing this activity, the students will take a nature walk, use scientific inquiry methods, and reflect on what was observed and learned. It is a good lesson to conduct on a nice spring day when the students would rather be outdoors anyway!

Grade Level and Subject: Fourth Grade Science, Language Arts, and P.E.

TEKS:  Science 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E  
Language Arts 15A, 15C, 16A, 18B, 18C  
P.E. 4B, 4G, 7A, 7C

Materials: notebooks for observation notes

Activity: The teacher should plan this activity on a nice, sunny day with little chance of rain or wind. The students should be instructed to wear tennis shoes or other shoes in which they can walk comfortably.

The class will begin by talking about things in nature, such as plants and animals. The students should hypothesize about what they might observe on their walk, writing it down in their observation notebooks.

The teacher should then take the class on a nature walk. It can be on the playground or around the school and should take about 30 minutes to complete. The students should, as they are walking, take notes on things in nature that interest them. The teacher might want to set some guidelines for the students as to what to look for as they walk. For example, the teacher might want the students to look for a flowering tree, an evergreen tree, and a deciduous tree. Once the students have observed the various types of trees, they are to write down the location and description of the trees seen.

Once the walk is over and the students are back in the classroom, they are to write about what they observed. They can even illustrate their observations. The students should look at the hypotheses they wrote and compare their findings with the hypotheses.

Evaluation: The teacher needs to make sure that the nature walk occurs at a moderate pace, with a rest stop or two. He or she should give the students time to write in their observation journals to complete the writing assignment they will have when they return to class.